

## EDITORIAL.

MOST COLLEGE teachers of botany who are fit for their places would, we doubt not, greatly prefer to have pupils come to them without previous instruction (?) in botany than with the usual sort, which needs first of all eradication. For many of these false ideas the text books are responsible; for many the teachers. Misleading analogies are often suggested in text books, in books for popular reading, in lectures, and now they are appearing in alarming numbers in the bulletins of the agricultural experiment stations. The laudable object is always to make the statements more intelligible; in which object they often fail, and succeed only in implanting faulty conceptions. Two of these misleading analogies will serve as illustrations. No phrase is more common than "stomata, or *breathing-pores*," and it inevitably connects these apertures with respiration, with which they have almost, or quite, nothing to do. As well call the perspiratory ducts of the human skin "*breathing-tubes*"! The former analogy is as thoroughly false as the latter. Why not say air-pores if we must have an English form? Respiration is already weighted to the last limit with misunderstandings; this millstone ought to be removed from its neck. "*Spores i. e., bodies that are like seeds in use*" — does that analogy illuminate or obscure? The writer from whom this is taken was speaking of conidia, which are much more "*like*" cuttings or slips in use than like seeds. But why compare at all seeds and spores, mycelium and roots, conidiophores and peduncles? Why not let it be understood from the outset that the fungi are not comparable with the phanerogams? Their structure is simple enough to be understood if described without comparison. When analogy in function is predicated, inferences of similarity in structure, wrong as they may be, are made unconsciously when one object is well known and the other wholly unknown. Examples might be multiplied. Let the teacher in the class-room, before an audience, and in popular bulletins scrupulously avoid misleading analogies.

## CURRENT LITERATURE.

Adaptations to Pollination.<sup>1</sup>

This is a continuation of a work published in 1888 as Heft No. 10 of the Bibliotheca Botanica, and noticed in the *Gazette*, xiii, 134. The

<sup>1</sup>AUGUST SCHULZ.—Beiträge zur Kenntniss der Bestäubungseinrichtungen und Geschlechtsvertheilung bei den Pflanzen, Vol. II. Bibliotheca Botanica, Heft no. 17, I & II. Cassel: Theodor Fischer, 1890.